

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Regents Communication

ACTION REQUEST

Subject: Report of Faculty Retirement

Action Requested: Adoption of Retirement Memoir

Antón Shammás, B.A., professor of Middle East literature, Department of Comparative Literature, and professor of Middle East literature, Department of Middle East Studies, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, retired from active faculty status on May 31, 2022.

Professor Shammás attended Hebrew University in Jerusalem, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in English and Arabic literatures and the history of art in 1972. He worked as the editor of the Arabic literary magazine *Al-Sharq* from 1970-75, and as a free-lance writer for Hebrew newspapers in Jerusalem and Tel-Aviv from 1982-87. He came to the University of Michigan in 1987-88 as a Rockefeller Fellow in the Center for Middle Eastern and North African Studies, and stayed on in 1988-89 as a visiting fellow at the Institute for the Humanities. After serving intermittently for a decade as an adjunct professor in English, Near Eastern studies, and comparative literature, he joined the faculty of the University of Michigan as a professor in 1998.

Professor Shammás is a renowned Palestinian writer and translator of Arabic, Hebrew and English. He is the author of *Arabesques* (1986), translated from Hebrew into many languages, reissued in English paperback (2023), and internationally celebrated as a “tour de force” and “a reinvention of the novel.” His fiction, essays and book reviews have appeared in various literary magazines and journals, including *The New York Review of Books*, *The New York Times*, *Harper’s Magazine*, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, and edited volumes such as *Lives in Translation* (2003) and *Hebrew Writers: On Writing* (2008). He has published three volumes of poetry, with English translations of his poems appearing in *New Writing From Israel* (1976), *Anthology of Modern Palestinian Literature* (1992), and *Banipal* (1998). His exquisite writing often reflects on translation, for example in essays like “The Nightmare of the Translator” (2011) and “Can the Bilingual Speak?” (2022), and in a widely cited *Critical Inquiry* article, “Torture into Affidavit, Dispossession into Poetry: On Translating Palestinian Pain” (2017). During his years of teaching, Professor Shammás has been a dedicated and deeply beloved mentor to his students, who describe him as always generous with his mind and emotions; his time, comments, and advice; his willingness to listen with transformative attention; and his readiness to reach out, comfort and encourage.

The Regents now salute this distinguished scholar by naming **Antón Shammás, professor emeritus of Middle East literature, Department of Comparative Literature, and professor emeritus of Middle East literature, Department of Middle East Studies, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.**

Requested by:



Sally J. Churchill, J.D.
Vice President and Secretary of the University

May 2022